



Rhythm Bones Player

A Newsletter of the Rhythm Bones Society

Volume 26, No. 3 2024

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Fall is here. A season of death and rebirth. It is with a heavy heart that I need to acknowledge the deaths in our community. Jerry Barnett, Stan Von Hagen, Bernie Worrell, and Tommy Cowett have all passed on since last I wrote to you all. You will find memorials both in this newsletter and on our website.

Having acknowledged the deaths, where will we find the rebirth? Rhythm bones have brought so much joy to my life. I have a concept of Bones Ambassadors that I believe I have shared with our community before. In the 1900's I can point to a handful of rhythm bones players that kept our tradition alive. Without them, I would not be playing rhythm bones today.

I think of Percy Danforth. A man who is rumored to have sold over 30,000 pairs of rhythm bones in his lifetime. Percy took every opportunity to introduce

folks to rhythm bones. Many current and former members of the RBS learned about rhythm bones from Percy. Jonathon Danforth, Percy's grandson, has served on our board, contributed to our website and continues to participate in upholding rhythm bones playing traditions. Search YouTube for "Shake Your Bones" by the Jethros – you're in for a treat.

I think of Joe Birl, who allegedly sold over 100,000 pairs of rhythm bones in his lifetime. He is the only known rhythm bones player to hold a patent with the US government on a modification to the rhythm bones. He came up with the idea to add a notch to make them easier to hold. He also created a Bakelite mold so he could mass produce rhythm bones and for many years you could find his rhythm bones in music stores. His (Continued on Page 2)

Phillip 'VGO' Terry - Musician and Storyteller

VGO, (Phillip Terry) is an award winning Florida Old Time Music Championship multi-instrumentalist and singer. He can play about 130 instruments and has perfect pitch. His interest in the stories and the history of music led him down the path of learning the classic blues and the music of the Civil War era.

Among the Florida Old Time and Folk Community, VGO's music and storytelling skills are considered top-notch. His knowledge of old time traditional music is deep and authentic. He is a treasure to the music community.

Recognized as an accomplished storyteller and as a blues and old time musician, VGO continues to perform and do "historic impressions" for museums and historic events.

He says that he plays music from ten-and-a-half of the last eleven centuries. "I've been singing for six decades and playing for over five decades." But he can't sing and play without telling the stories of the music.

VGO started collecting and playing string instruments at age 11, when he was living outside Washington D.C. He studied with Nehemiah "Skip" James, Mississippi John Hurt, Eddie "Son" House, and several others performing at The Ontario Place in N.W.D.C. VGO has also met and played with

Rev. Gary Davis while partnering with Richard Leiberson, later of the Central Park Sheiks. VGO played with Booker T. Washington White in 1969 then in 1970 he moved to London, U.K. and joined the Patriarch of Glastonbury. His band, under Stephen Delft, luthier, played live shows and on BBC-2 TV. In 1974 VGO returned to the U.S. and partnered with E.M. "Mother" Scott. There is a photograph of VGO in performance with (Continued on Page 4)



Vgo and a few of his many instruments

Editorial

September 25, 2024 - What a day for the Rhythm Bones Society celebrating our 25th Anniversary with an email that was sent that day. It is on Page 3, and shows our founding members, 25th Anniversary graphic with the individual Bones Fest graphics, the group photograph from our 25th Anniversary Bones Fest, and two clickable links, one by Tom Connolly showing the history of RBS, and second, the 2024 RBS Ensemble video produced by Michael Baxter (see their Posts on our Homepage).

Phillip 'VGO' Terry has share his instruments and storytelling with us at three Bones Fests. One of the many instruments he plays is rhythm bones, and his story begins on Page 1.

There has never been a page like Page 4 in this newsletter noting the passing of, Jerry Barnett, Tommy Cowett, Stan Von Hagen, and Bernie Worrell. Jerry was a member in our early years, Tommy was part of the Cowett family who started our Society, Stan was a late, but active member, and Bernie was part of us for most our 25 years. They will be missed.

There was a review of the book, 'Tambo and Bones' in the Vol 26, No 1 issue, and I plan to review of the book, 'The Birth of the Banjo,' in the next issue. Both reviews seek to show the importance of the instruments to Minstrelsy since some writers barely mention them. If this interests you, please contact me so we can write something scholarly.

(Continued From Page 1)

estate owns the trademark on the term "rhythm bones" and it is through their good grace that we are allowed to use the term. Joe was an incredible player, and unfortunately, like many others, he is sorely missed.

I could go on about several other giants that kept our tradition alive in the 1900's. Ev Cowett comes to mind. The man that organized the very first Bones Fest, and who was the first Executive Director of the Rhythm Bones Society. When he organized the first fest he thought that he might be one of the last rhythm bones players in the US. But he managed to find others, and to bring them together. He trained just about his entire family to play rhythm bones, and unfortunately, we

mourn the passing of Tommy Cowett.

So where will we find rebirth? Steve and Jennifer Brown recently lost the happiest rhythm bones player of all, their son Jeremy. Yet Steve is already planning to host a rhythm bones workshop at the New England Folk Festival (NEFFA) in 2025, as he has done for so many years in the past. Steve's presence as the longtime Executive Director of the RBS, along with his steadfast commitment to NEFFA, his tireless efforts in making and selling rhythm bones, and his fostering of relationships in Abbeyfeale with the All Ireland Bones Competition and Fleadh By The Feale Committee are almost incomparable in the effort to keep rhythm bones playing alive in the 21st Century. This is where we see rebirth.

Michael Baxter has decided to use his skills in videography over the past few years to produce collaborative rhythm bones playing videos that bring together players from several continents. This year might be his best effort yet. You can see both a trailer and the full video on the RBS homepage. Huge thanks to Michael and everyone involved. This is where we see rebirth.

Board member Tom Connelly runs Irish Bones. Hand crafting rhythm bones for a diverse customer base, shipping to a variety of countries. He is also our most active Facebook contributor, routinely engaging folks on anything related to the bones. This is where we see rebirth.

Martin O'Donoghue, from the Fleadh By The Feale committee recently reached out to me to see if there were American rhythm bones players interested in attending the All Ireland Bones Competition this year. Anyone interested? Reach out to me if so. I intend to go, as I have for the past 3 years. Board member Dean Robinson has been there every year that I have been. Together, we have developed relationships with rhythm bones playing community in Abbeyfeale. A little birdie told me Steve Brown was considering making the trip back this year, as he has done so many times in the past. This is where we see rebirth.

This newsletter features Phillip 'VGO' Terry. VGO is a singer, storyteller, and multi instrumentalist. As you read this featured article, you can't help but be struck by the depth and breadth of VGO's passion as a chronicler, re-

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The Rhythm Bones Player is published quarterly by the Rhythm Bones Society. Nonmember subscriptions are \$10 for one year; RBS members receive the Player as part of their dues.

The Rhythm Bones Players welcomes letters to the Editor and article on any aspect of bones playing. All material submitted for consideration is subject to editing and condensation.

Rhythm Bones Central web site: rhythmbones.com

searcher, and historian. VGO has shared some small piece of his experiences and chronicles at multiple Bones Fests, most recently in Mississippi. This is where we see rebirth.

For my part, I perform publicly on rhythm bones (among other things) with some regularity. I am always happy to give a demonstration, always happy to talk about rhythm bones. I always have an extra set somewhere, just in case I meet someone who takes to them. Whether I sell them or donate them, I want to be sure I can pass the tradition along. This is where we see rebirth.

We've had quite a bit of loss in recent years. I miss my old friends. I hope to make new ones. I miss the old rhythm bones ambassadors. I hope to help train new ones. If you are interested in getting more involved in the RBS in any way, please don't hesitate to reach out. This is where we see rebirth.

Your friendly neighborhood bones player, *Skeffington Flynn*

The 25th Anniversary Celebration Email



RBS Founding Members on September 25, 1999



A printable version of the above 25th Anniversary Graphic is attached



A Rewarding Journey of Celebration

When the Rhythm Bones Society Board was preparing for our 25th Anniversary celebrations at Clarksdale, Mississippi, I think I volunteered to put together a few slides showing pictures of events down the years. Steve Wixson has done an astounding job all these years keeping records and publishing the Rhythm Bones Player newsletter, so I thought it would be a simple task to put some of these gems together for people to enjoy. Then Steve said he would put a slot in the agenda to celebrate as a group, and I got the job of putting the PowerPoint slides together.

I love PowerPoint – I use it in my work all the time. I also use it (to the chagrin of my graphic artist friends and colleagues) to create artwork for advertisements, brochures, learning aids, booklets and even videos and cartoons. In 2021, I used it to create the booklet for my son’s wedding and almost got hired for another one as a result – until my other son noticed the home-printed booklets began to suffer a bit in the humidity of the post-wedding celebrations...

So, I was delighted to help out with the presentation for the celebrations. Of course two things conspired against an easy task – the first, the old adage that the cobbler’s kids have no shoes. I can run off presentations for my work very quickly and easily. When it was for the RBS, a group who are very near and dear to my heart and for whom I wanted to do the best possible job, a combination of perfectionism and procrastination set in and I got to Clarksdale with the presentation only half completed. The second thing then kicked in – I became immediately immersed in Randy Sepalla’s wonderful Fest and was so late completing my slides that Skeff Flynn and Steve Wixson had to juggle the agenda. Sorry guys!

In the end it went great. Despite at least one slide not being complete, and some errors and omissions, the session we had in Clarksdale remembering the years past and the people passed, was one of those warm and loving exchanges that the RBS is defined by.

Since the Fest I have been meaning to clean up the slides and make them a bit more representative of the amazing history and people of the RBS. I got the chance when Steve Wixson was putting together a celebratory email, and I suggested we include a link to the updated slides. Thereby talking myself into another bout of perfectionism and procrastination!

For me it is a real honour to be part of the Rhythm Bones Society. It is a privilege to serve on the Board. When I was reworking and formatting the slides this past week I felt as if I was re-living every single Bones Fest. I recognized so many faces of the people I know, and I felt I knew so many more because I have heard so much about them. It was like sorting through and organizing a family album, and then delving further back the family tree – but I felt it was a better experience because there is no other family I know that is so bound together by their love and respect for the simple and beautiful instrument that is the rhythm bones.

I hope you enjoy the brief look back through 27 years of history, and keep clicking your rhythm bones so that some of us can keep clicking our keyboards to remember, celebrate and support the rhythm bones for the next 25 years of Bones Fests. *Tom Connolly* [In the email it was the fourth image in the left hand column, a Post on our Homepage, and finally rests in the ‘History of RBS’ Exhibit in our Online Museum.]

The 25th Anniversary RBS Graphic

The 25th Anniversary RBS Graphic is the second image in the left column and larger on Page 5, and presents the individual Fest Graphic for each of the Bones Fests held during the 25 years of RBS. Note that Bones Fest I and Bones Fest II were held prior to the founding of the Rhythm Bones Society. Also note that Steve Brown started the Fest Graphic tradition at BFV, and the graphics for Bones Fest III and IV were created by Tom Connolly.

There is a copy of the 25th Anniversary Graphic suitable for framing at <https://rhythmbone.org/documents/25thForPrinting.pdf>.

Dr. Stanley Von Hagen Obit



It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of Dr. Stanley Von Hagen who died peacefully on Friday, September 20, 2024. He was 86.

Stan was a distinguished and treasured professor of pharmacology and statistics for many years at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey before his retirement.

Stan was an accomplished rhythm bones player attending many Bones Fest with his wife, Jean. He learned about rhythm bones from the Carolina Chocolate Drops and then found RBS. Their first Fest was in Grand Rapids, MI in 2014 and they attended every Bones Fest since then except BFXXI in San Antonio. Steve Brown notes, "A great member, a great player, and incredibly nice person. He will be missed."

Check out his Personal Profile Page at <https://rhythmbones.com/player-profiles/von-hagen-stan/>

Tommy Cowett Obit



Tommy Cowett was born November 29, 1963, and died August 28, 2024. When the Cowett family performed, Tommy would accompany them on guitar though he did play rhythm bones, and being a drummer in a puck rock band, he played them like he played the drums - hard and fast.

He was a Founding Member of RBS, and was one of the few at Bones Fest I. We last saw him at the Virtual Bones Fest XXIV.

Bernie Worrell Obit

Bernie (Mescher) Worrell, age 80, died Wednesday, September 4, 2024. Her formal Obituary with comments by her husband Tom is at <https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/name/bernice-worrell-obituary?id=56235910>.

She and her brother, the late Jerry Mescher, performed as a duo in a most unusual and entertaining style. Her Personal Profile Page is at <https://rhythmbones.com/player-profiles/worrell-bernie>



[nie/](#) and tells that story along with some of the awards she won and video of the two of them performing. They are shown in matching uniforms in the top photograph in the middle column, later with the addition of Jerry's wife Sharon, and with Sharon after Jerry passed.

Jerry Barnett Obit



Dr. Jerry Barnett passed away on October 20, 2024. Jerry was a regular at the National Traditional Country Music Association Festival winning the the Bones and Spoons Competition and being inducted into their Old Time Hall of Fame. We first met Jerry at Bones Fest IV and he attended a few others. Jerry was great with cowboy songs, 'The Old Chasm Trail' in particular. Also a good storyteller.

Michael Baxter's 2024 Ensemble Video

The last image on the 25th Anniversary Email on Page 3 is the 2024 Ensemble Video produced by Michael Baxter and friends. This exciting video is going on our Homepage so in one click visitors see what playing rhythm bones is about.

Here is what Mike said about it: "Thank you to the talented musicians and performers that made this RBS Ensemble the best video yet. Sometimes sequels don't live up to the original, but this one surpassed the previous two. Annika Mikolajko-Osman's ragtime piano took it over the top. She, Tom Braatalien, Harry Zulch, and myself spent many hours recording the music. It turned out far better than we expected."

The players are Annika, Mike, Tom Connolly, Bruno Giles, Skeffington Flynn, Steve Litsios, Scott Miller, and James Yoshazawa.

25th Anniversary Rhythm Bones Society Graphic



25th Anniversary Rhythm Bones Society Graphic showing individual Fest Graphics for Fest III thru XX-VIII. There is a version suitable for framing at <https://rhythmbones.org/documents/25thForPrinting.pdf>



VGO on guitar with his rhythm bones instructor, Hank Tenenbaum, during the History of the Blues Workshop at Bones Fest XXIII in Clarksdale, Mississippi. Vgo's story starts on Page 1.

(VGO continued from Page 1)
 Mother Scott in the April 1980 issue of the National Geographic magazine. (pps 570-571)

VGO has played several well known music festivals including the Gambier Folk Festival, National Folk Festival, Smithsonian Folk Life Festival, Rutgers University, Smithsonian Institution Museum of History and Technology, Baltimore City Parks and Recreation, TV, Radio and before the United States Congress. VGO has appeared at the Florida Folk Festival every year since 1982.

In 1981, along with F. "Fritz" Kirsch, he formed the 97th Regimental Band to explore the music and culture of the U.S. Civil War. They played all over the United States and showcased in Branson, Mo.

VGO was in the ABC miniseries "North and South" part 2, second day, second hour. VGO was once a live exhibit at the American Museum in Bath, U.K. as a genuine "American Folk Singer."

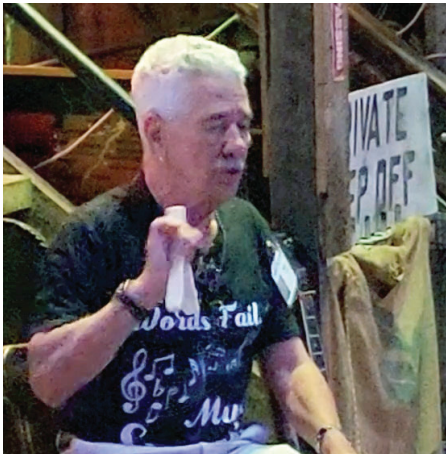
He has performed many live shows from Bristol, Road Island to Grass Valley, California including Fort Dodge, Iowa, San Angelo, Texas and Gettysburg to Angel Island in San Francisco Bay. His has performed at the Garage Mahal in San Antonio, Florida; The Pioneer Florida Museum in Dade City, Florida; Pinellas County Folk Festival and The Whistle Stop cafe in Safety Harbor, Florida.

Legends of music that influenced VGO's music and stories, Nehemiah "Skip" James, 1896 - 1972 gospel & blues, virtuosic guitar finger picking. Reverend Gary Davis 1896 - 1972, was blind, could play in any key, sang and played blues and ragtime instruments with passion and skill, did delta, ragtime, gospel and show songs, remains one of America's truly great folk artists. Eddie James "Son" House, Jr. 1902 - 1988, was an American blues singer and guitarist, noted for his highly emotional style of singing and slide guitar playing. Mississippi John Hurt, 1892 - 1966 country blues singer and guitarist, fast, highly syncopated style, world-renowned master of the acoustic guitar delicate vocals, inventive finger picking on guitar, and warm
 (Continued on Page 4)

personality.

E.M. "Mother" Scott 1893 - 1979. Mother Scott had sung and played guitar since the days of the traveling minstrel shows, first as a teenager in bordellos in the South and later with Leadbelly, Louis Armstrong, and Bessie Smith. After she took up music again in the 1960s, she played and sang with Kris Kristofferson, Alice Cooper, Joan Baez, and Judy Collins, among others. Mother Scott was also known as a crusader for senior citizen's rights.

Transcription of VGO's telephone interview with Mary Lee Sweet in July 2024



ML. Tell me how you learn to play the bones?

VGO: Back in the mid 70s, I was invited by the Folk Lore Society of Greater Washington to make a presentation about music from the Caribbean, particularly from the island of Andros in the Bahamas, Joseph Spense and the Pintar family, and songs from Trinidad Tobago, a strove Tuesday festival. It was held in the ethical culture center of Washington, DC, on upper 16th street, a huge modernistic building with a large open space. Ethical culture is analogous to a church. After the presentations were made, everybody sat around in a big circle on the floor and they went around each group or individual presented a song and as I was presenting some other thing that I was offering suddenly this fellow plops down next to me playing rhythm bones, and I was quite startled and shouted out 'bones.' That turned out to be Hank Tenenbaum.

I had heard rhythm bones before in a Blind Blake's recording of Dry Bones

Shuffle which I played for you all a few weeks ago at Bones Fest XXVIII. I had the idea of what they could do but had never seen them played before. So I globed onto Hank like glue and sought to learn every thing he could teach me which was not only how to play them but how to make them. I also included him in my public performance and he became a regular sidekick of mine with 'Lucy and VGO.' We had a saxophone player, Rich Greengold who played with us frequently around Washington DC at any rate.

Then when I moved to Florida, I became involved with Civil War reenacting, and one of the places we did a reenactment was a farm outside of Brookville, Florida. There had been several horses that died on the property and their skeletons were still there, and I retrieved rib bones from said skeletons. I took them home and cut them into appropriate size pieces so I could have actual bone rhythm bones. Up until that time I had been playing mostly on pieces of pine that I had collected from renovations done in Georgetown, DC.

I wanted to have a more traditional sound, and I had also started to explore the different ways of holding them. Hank had shown me a little pamphlet from the time of then from the time of the Revolution or a little before the American revolution that not only spoke about, but had drawings demonstrating the proper way of playing the bones according to the dancing masters of the day. This was to stand in balletic fourth position with the opposite legs and arms forward. But with the rhythm bones wrapped around the index finger. Presumably the instrument was to give a softer and expression of less volume. But I also had learned that the Irish put two fingers between the bones, the index and the middle and played more toward the end of them making a thicker sound. I experimented with a number of different sonorities possible with the instrument.

After Hank had given me rudimentary education in it, I did a lot of exploration and research on my own to see what I was comfortable with playing them. I was watching him in other groups other than playing with me. I had learned that it was not popular thing to jump into a jam, so I hadn't actually played out with a lot of people with me playing rhythm

bones.

I had experimented with recordings I had made and records that I played and stuff, but I did not make many exploration in public with them other than I used them for my own accompaniment of my own unaccompanied accapella singing. That essentially the story of it.

ML: Wow! So how did you happen to be giving a presentation on Serbian music?

VGO: When I was in high school I had gone to a number of fiddler's conventions in Virginia and North Carolina, and one of them, Union Grove, and I participated in the contest of Bands. The band that won that that year was the



New York City Ramblers with Winnie Winston and Jody Stecker, and I can't remember the other players. Winnie Winston was a very accomplished 5-string banjo bluegrass player, but I was more interested in Jody Stecker and his guitar playing, and became quiet interested in his further research into world music. He had gone to the Bahamas and Osaka particularly for Folkways records and later Verve Records to record Joseph Spence and the Indar family. I had acquired several of those records, and was quite enamored with the singing some of which was religious music of different stripes. I had great interest in Joseph Spence in particular because as an accompanist his

guitar playing was fairly singular, I won't say unique, but a unique finger style, and I had struggled to learn a lot of that stuff.

The group singing, Spence, rarely bothered to learn the words. He sang a bass part in sort of a growl. When some of the folk lore students, masters and doctorate students that I had spoken with that had to do a lot of world history listening and were expected to do analogs to Joseph Spence around the hot in tots among the world. [VGO demonstrated a growl.] So I had involved myself learning that music, and at the same time I had a friend in DC from Trinidad who had given me tapes of collections of the contest winners from the annual Trinidad parade contests. I had learned quite a number of those.

I don't know who was aware of what I was doing, but I was singing these out of the street and in cafes and different places where I played. So I wasn't doing it in my closet. It was kind of a surplus to that I should be invited not being a member of the folklore society of Greater Washington. I had gone there to see a bunch of notables they brought into town including Frank Warner and some others. Frank Warner had collected 'He's got the whole world in his hand,' Hang down you head Tom Dooley, and a number of songs that went to the mainstream of American consciousness at the time.

So I knew what they did and I had gone out to certain gatherings and festivals of the parks of northern Virginia. In fact at one of these, Prince Williams's Park I believe it was, I had bugged a number of the cabins and large meeting rooms that they were holding events. I set tape recorders going in each of these buildings cause I knew I couldn't be at all of them. I brought home 16 hours of recordings that I later listened back to and collected further music from.

The Folklore Society of Greater Washington is an outstanding resource, and they digitize decades of their concerts and various other stuff which is available on the Internet so I have been told. Hank has been after me to get onto it and listen to that stuff and see if I could identify who I am hearing on it, but I don't have the kind of connectivity. I am studying other things and haven't had time to that kind of research. I still to this

day sing a fair amount of that material that I collected and other things that I had sort of recently discovered in the last 15 years or so.

I had learned a guitar piece by Joseph Spence that he called 'the Lord is my Shepherd' and the more I listened to it the more I thought he did not make this up but had to hear it in church. In the Bahamas the church of England is the mainstay. I started looking it up and I did have connectivity at that time and I found of all people, Harry Secombe from the Goon Show, singing four of the verses which comes from the 23rd Psalm. I made up my own fifth verse to make sure it had all the 23rd Psalm in it, and later Pat LeBree found for me a songbook of religious material which had it in it with all 5 verses. My daughter had given me a song called 'rise up Singing' which had the words for it and attributed it to a Scott's Prayer Book from 1658 or something. I come to learn at the death of Queen Elizabeth, they played it at her funeral because it was her favorite hymn.

I had a number of tyins. When I was in England, living in England, I was an apprentice to a luthier there who lived on Cable Street or just off Cable street, East End. He repaired instruments for the incredible String Band who would do world tours and when they'd come home they would fill up the room with a hundred road cases of the various instruments they carried around with them.

They had a show closer tune that they used all the time that they had gotten from Joseph Spence and the Pintar Family, *I Bid You Goodnight*. [Singing] "Lay down my dear brother lay down, lay down and take your rest. Why don't you lay your hear on my Saviour's breast. I love you, but Jesus loves you the best. Bid you good night, good night." [end singing]. That was one of the first things I had learned of Joseph Spence playing. The singing of that group, can't remember all their names right now. I now long since lost all those records in my perpetual moving.

I was once cataloged, named and identified as an itinerant museum curator because wherever I would go I would wind up with a collection of string instruments and various other kinds of

instruments, art work and music books and whatever. The most of it has gone by the boards, but my memory is relatively good (it's not as good as I'd like it to be). I've always marveled at brain operations where they take electric probes and run it around on the surface of the brain in an open skull and people can suddenly clearly remember events in their life.

Once I was at a fiddlers convention, and Tom Ashley was there and he won again the ballad singing contest which he had done years something like 38 years. As I was wondering around the ballpark where they held the even, I came across Tom sitting there entertaining a bevy of young ladies sing some of the most squirrely, dirty songs that I have ever heard - none of which I can remember.

ML: Have you talked to Hank recently?

VGO: I texted him when I learned that Dr Bernice Johnson Reagon had died. I don't know if you know who she was. For one thing she was the founder of a group called 'Sweet honey in the rock.' She also was the head of research into the diaspora, at Smithsonian, Library of Congress. I saw her when she was 17 or 18 years old with the 'The Freedom Singers' that came thru Washington with a show that included Julius Lester who has since become known for writing books. He was quite a performer. He was the first man I ever saw who played slide guitar with a knife.

Bernice was a force of nature at that time, and she went on to academia and so forth. She steered a very different path than I did. I was aware of what she was doing but I never had much interaction with her afterwards because her allegiance to academia was such that she was impressed by what was published and what was on paper and so forth. I was quite happy with the oral tradition that we didn't justify thru peer review.

VGO: Have you ever run across the Anthology of American Folk Music put out by Folkways in 1952. It was on 6 long playing albums. I was introduced to that in the early 60's, and listened to all of it much of it many times. I recently got another copy of it and I look thru the list of performers that were presented there. I added up and I think I wound up meeting or playing with or seeing about 54%

of them alive. Back in the 60's, Peter Stansfeld said at that time everybody who was listening to that Anthology was hearing music that was only about 30 years old having been recorded in the late 20's or very early 30's. At that point we were calling it old time music and its hard to image we would call the Rolling Stones or Beatles the same at this time when we are nearly twice the length of time as it was in the 60's.

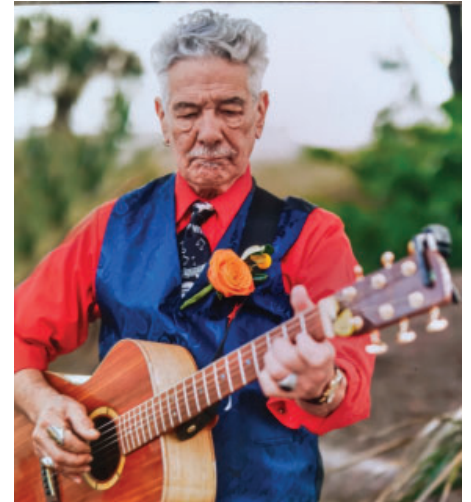
Part of the advantage of living in Washington at that time was researchers were going out and trying to discover those artists and bring them to the Library of Congress to document. That is how I got to meet Mississippi John Hurt, Skip James, and Sun House, Mat? Sliscom and ... I wound up playing on the same stage as many of them at the Ontario Place, various festivals around. Not necessarily with them. In 1976 at the Bicentennial, Mother Scott and her children and I think Hank were apart of that, and went to Ft McHenry, Baltimore, and went on stage five minutes after

midnight on July 4th and played for an hour. Later that day, I'm thinking it was that day, we were on the mall on a pyramid of platforming, and Peter, Paul and Mary were the group descending those platforms as we were ascending.

I had met Peter Yarrow my freshman year at college because one of my band-mates in college, Christopher Hayden Gust had been invited to sit in on the vetting process for the 1600 or 1800 album or whatever it was called. We were sitting in the control booth with Peter We were on the floor and he was busy listening to the various takes. He would listen to a 4 second segment of 5 different recordings and then he would say I want her voice from 1. I want Paul's voice from 3. I want my voice from 5. I want the guitarist from 2, and they linked the album together like a crazy quilt. It was insane to me how the finished product had nothing to do with a contiguous performance.

[Mary Lee Sweet is a rhythm bones player and she and her husband, Frank

on banjo perform 19th Century music as a duo called Backintyme (<http://backintyme.com>). She is a fan and friend of VGO and introduced him to the Rhythm Bones Society. Check out her player profile page at <https://rhythmbones.com/player-profiles/sweet-mary-lee/>]



Rhythm Bones Society

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Address Correction Requested